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SUBJECT: CAMBODIA CONCERNED ABOUT HAMPERED RELIEF EFFORTS
IN BURMA

REF: STATE 59122

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED.

1. (SBU) Pol/Ec Chief June 3 conveyed reftel points on the growing concern over lack of access for aid workers in the cyclone-ravaged disaster areas of Burma to MFA Secretary of State Dr. Kao Kim Hourn who is in charge of ASEAN affairs. Noting the potential for the ASEAN-UN-Burma cooperative effort to achieve more results, Pol/Ec Chief urged every effort be made to end forced relocations which would cause further deaths due to disease and starvation.

2. (SBU) Kao Kim Hourn was clearly pained by the account of limitations to access and the forced relocations, which he asserted he had also heard through other sources. Cambodia had tried its best to formally sway the Burmese regime at the May 19 ASEAN foreign ministers meeting, but Cambodian ForMin Hour Namhong had been appalled by the lack of attention Burmese officials paid to their ASEAN brethren, he noted. Efforts were being channeled through the ASEAN Secretariat - which had a team on the ground in Burma - and through personal interventions between ASEAN officials and their friends within the Burmese government, he said. On Burma's commitment to UNSYG Ban to be open to aid workers, Kao Kim Hourn wondered aloud if members of the top Burmese leadership were even aware of what was going on or if they were being shielded from the facts on the ground.

3. (SBU) Burma's ambassador to Cambodia told an ASEAN-EU Senior Officials Meeting last week in Phnom Penh that the government was facing too many problems, Kao Kim Hourn recounted. Between splintered ethnic groups and its economic transformation from a centrally planned economy to a market economy, the Burmese government was overwhelmed. Kao Kim Hourn also noted the EU's strong political messages at the meeting regarding the extension of ASSK's detention, other ongoing political detentions, as well as the EU's condemnation of the referendum. Pol/Ec Chief reiterated our points about the humanitarian disaster and the critical need to address these now, noting an embassy DATT effort to secure blanket overflight clearances from the RGC to assist those U.S. C-130 military flights delivering aid to Rangoon.
CAMPBELL